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ABSTRACT

The Higher Education Linkage Program (HELP) was initiated by the University of Arizona (UA) to improve opportunities for qualified two-year college students from the Pima Community College District and Cochise College to transfer to UA and complete a baccalaureate degree; to increase the pool of potential baccalaureate applicants by identifying, motivating, and assisting community college students; and to increase minority participation and graduation rates in baccalaureate programs. HELP involved students, faculty, academic officers, and student affairs personnel in activities such as student recruitment, student advising and assistance, faculty information exchanges, academic advisors' and counselors' workshops, and student affairs officers' programs. For students, benefits of HELP included early admission status, priority housing, orientation discounts, dual advising, campus tour and transfer day, transcript evaluation and peer advising and assistance. UA's experiences with HELP revealed that communication and interaction between two- and four-year faculty, early personal contact with students, and the distribution of curriculum guides to counselors and students enhanced the transfer process, while inflexible course schedules, transportation problems, financial needs, fear of the UA atmosphere, and concerns about academic rigor and competition hindered the transfer process. (RO)

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

TUCSON, ARIZONA

HIGHER EDUCATION LINKAGE PROGRAM

A TWO-YEAR/FOUR-YEAR TRANSFER PROJECT IN COOPERATION WITH

PIMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT AND COCHISE COLLEGE

PROGRESS REPORT 1985-86

Dr. June B. Dempsey
Chair, Articulation Committee
University of Arizona

June 1, 1986

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The University of Arizona, a land grant institution located in Tucson, was founded in 1885 by an act of the Thirteenth Territorial Legislature. The University has major missions of teaching, research and public service. The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education has ranked the University as 13th in research and development expenditures among the 29 public universities listed as Research I institutions. The University offers 139 undergraduate programs, 156 master's and 95 doctoral programs in 10 colleges and six schools to more than 30,000 students. Approximately 40% of the enrollment transferred from another postsecondary institution of higher education, with a little more than 50% of the transfer students coming from two-year institutions. The largest number of community college transfers are from the nearby campuses of Pima Community College District. Nearly 2600 former Pima students were enrolled at the University of Arizona during the 1985-86 academic year, including approximately 800 concurrently enrolled at both institutions.

Pima Community College District, located in Tucson, is a public multi-campus two-year college district offering general education, college transfer and occupational education courses to approximately 21,000 students. On the average, 800 Pima students transfer to the University of Arizona each year.

Cochise College, approximately 100 miles southeast of Tucson, has two campuses serving southeastern Arizona. The Douglas campus, located near the Mexican border, serves 1371 residence and commuter students. The Sierra Vista campus, located in the fast-growing Sierra Vista-Fort Huachuca community, has an enrollment of 2510. Approximately 75 Cochise students transfer to the University of Arizona each year.

These two community colleges were selected as the cooperating institutions for the two-year pilot transfer project sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation because of existing articulation agreements, proximity to the University, and a long tradition of cooperation with the University. These colleges also provide an opportunity to determine the different needs of urban and rural, nearby and distant community college transfer students.

The University has cooperated with the state's community colleges in a variety of ways to encourage community college students to complete their baccalaureate degrees. For example, the senior vice president for academic affairs is a member of a statewide Academic Program Articulation Steering Committee comprised of the chief academic officers of the state's two-year and four-year institutions. This committee is responsible for discipline-based statewide articulation task forces and the state's Course Equivalency Guide. The University also hosts an annual University/community college academic officers' conference. Student performance reports are regularly sent to community colleges.

The University and Pima Community College district have enjoyed a long-standing positive relationship exemplified by a joint Cooperative Effort Committee which meets several times a year to provide campus updates and discuss mutual concerns. The committee also sponsors an annual faculty luncheon which provides an opportunity for UA and Pima colleagues to hear reports from the presidents and to discuss transfer programs.

A variety of informal and formal articulation efforts have occurred between colleges of the University and other community colleges as well, including a 2+2 program between the College of Arts and Sciences and Cochise College which has recently been extended to other community colleges. However, despite these efforts and the University's admissions growth trend over recent years, transfer student admissions declined in fall 1985. In particular, admission of instate transfer students decreased by 13.9% in comparison to the previous year. Further, only 504 Pima students and 55 Cochise students were admitted to the University in fall 1985 as compared to 558 and 60 the previous fall.

HIGHER EDUCATION LINKAGE PROGRAM

The Higher Education Linkage Program (HELP) was initiated to address this concern. The program seeks to improve opportunities for qualified two-year college students to transfer to the University to complete a baccalaureate degree. A secondary purpose is to increase the pool of potential baccalaureate applicants by identifying, motivating and assisting community college students who would like to complete an undergraduate degree. Another purpose of the program is to increase minority participation and graduation rates in baccalaureate programs.

The first step was the negotiation of an agreement with Pima and Cochise administrators outlining the plan and describing each institution's commitment to the program. A common definition of the transfer student was agreed upon. The plan received the approval of the presidents of each institution and a liaison was identified by each college.

The next step in initiating the program was to begin the process of identifying factors which contribute to successful transfer and barriers which impede the transfer process. Those factors and barriers over which the institutions could exercise some influence were incorporated into the HELP plan.

The plan involved students, faculty, academic officers and student affairs personnel. The plan included student recruitment, student advising and assistance, faculty information exchanges, academic advisors' and counselors' workshops and student affairs officers' programs.

STUDENTS

The community colleges supplied the names and addresses of potential transfer students using information from their admissions applications or enrollment in university-parallel programs. These students were sent a brochure describing the benefits of the HELP program, including early admission status after satisfactory completion of 36 hours at the community college, priority registration, priority housing, orientation discounts, dual advising, campus tour and transfer day, transcript evaluation and peer advising and assistance.

The 145 students who signed up to participate in the program, including 22% minorities, provided information about academic and career goals, work status, student status, ethnicity, grade point averages and test scores, previous colleges attended and intended transfer date. Over 55% of the HELP participants are 25 or under; 34% are 21 and under. Only 17% are over 35 years of age. More than 61% of the students work, and of that number, 64% work 20 hours or more per week. Nearly 75% of the students attend college full time (12 hours or more). In exploring the relationship between student status and work status, 61% of the students who work 20 hours or more per week also attend school on a full time basis. Almost half of the students plan to transfer to the University in fall 1986. The most popular majors are business (31%), arts and sciences (23%), education (15%) and engineering (14%).

Each student received a letter of welcome containing specific information about his or her major, campus services and dates of visits to the community college campus by admissions officers and faculty advisors. Letters with information updates were sent at least twice each semester. HELP participants were given a direct line to the Director of the Program who was available to answer questions and provide the names of campus contacts. Each student's name and address was sent to the college of the major indicated on the application to enable the college and appropriate department to make follow-up contacts. Students were able to schedule individual appointments through their community college counseling office to meet with University advisors on the community college campus or on the U of A campus by appointment. Minority students were referred to the Office of Minority Student Affairs to acquaint them with pre- and post-enrollment services available under its auspices.

This group has provided a data base which will be used to further identify transfer aids and transfer barriers as well as to study graduation rates of Pima and Cochise students in comparison to previous years. HELP students will be asked to respond to an evaluation survey in the fall to determine how the program may be improved.

Transfer Day was a particularly successful event. More than 165 students attended a Transfer Day on the U of A campus (in contrast to 12 students who attended last year's program) to tour the campus, meet with academic advisors, meet other transfer students, be entertained by fine arts students, and share a barbeque on the campus mall. The success of this program was largely a result of sending individual invitations to HELP students and to the cooperation of some of the community colleges in providing transportation.

FACULTY

Each institution was asked to identify faculty to participate in information exchanges on each campus to become acquainted with campus facilities and programs, to discuss the academic needs of transfer students, and to review articulated programs and courses. A consultant familiar with transfer programs nationally was invited to the orientation for faculty and student affairs personnel. Faculty were asked to evaluate the faculty information exchanges. Responses ranged from, "First time I'd ever been on that campus and met any of their faculty" to "We used to meet once in awhile to discuss programs and courses, but now we plan to meet regularly". Some faculty indicated that articulation in their disciplines has been an ongoing process, but this was largely due to individual contacts and friendships and not to institutional leadership o assistance.

STUDENT AFFAIRS PERSONNEL

Pima and Cochise identified student affairs personnel who would like to meet with their University counterparts. Three activities were planned: the orientation to the HELP program, a counselors' workshop, which included college counselors from throughout the state, and a workshop on student affairs and the transfer student. It was difficult for community college student affairs personnel, other than administrators, to attend these meetings during the academic year due to time and travel constraints. Those that attended felt the meetings were beneficial and expressed an interest in annual meetings.

FUTURE PLANS

The University intends to continue its efforts through the HELP program with Pima and Cochise Colleges. Plans call for expanding the program in a modified format to the seven community colleges in the Maricopa Community College District and to Arizona Western College in Yuma.

Other efforts are planned to enhance recruitment and retention of transfer students from Arizona's community colleges. Student Affairs has employed a former community college faculty member to direct the University's retention efforts for transfer students. In addition, the University has plans for or has already initiated the following: Partial tuition waivers for 250 transfer students; full tuition waivers for transfer students accepted into the honors program; an expanded peer advising/buddy program with more minority advisors; a summer bridge program; a student transfer center; the development of fact sheets and curriculum guides for each undergraduate major to be provided in notebook form to each community college counselor; a telephone advising program for Maricopa students; car pools for Cochise students; tape exchanges with Pima College to provide ease of transcript evaluation; expansion of upper division continuing education offerings; and an automated course equivalency guide. The most significant effort the University is considering is an Extended Day Program which will enable students to complete selected undergraduate degrees after 4 p.m. Currently, there are no undergraduate degree program opportunities available solely after 4 p.m. in spite of the fact that the University offers more than 400 courses in the late afternoon and evening each semester.

ACTIVITIES WHICH ENHANCED THE TRANSFER PROCESS

Faculty communication and interaction with community college faculty regarding academic degree program majors appears to be a factor in providing the information potential transfer students need to choose courses which will transfer to the major.

Early personal contact with students to assist them in planning the steps necessary for successful transfer, including the application process, academic advising, financial aid information, housing information, and an introduction to campus facilities and services demonstrates that the University is interested in them and desires to aid them in making the transition process as easy as possible. Personal contact gives them someone with whom they can identify -- an omsbudsman in the transfer process.

The distribution of curriculum guides to counselors and students assists students in making the correct curricular choices for their major. This information was important even where direct contact with faculty advisors was available.

Special preregistration times for transfer students on the U of A campus and pre-registration with University academic advisors on the Pima College campuses was very popular. Students may also pre-register during orientation.

The HELP brochure provided an encouragement for students to contact the University to initiate interest in transferring. Some students indicated they might not transfer until 1988, but they wanted to find out what they could do to be ready. Others said that this program gave them a chance to ask all the questions they had not been able to find answers to. Once again, it was an indication that the University wanted to welcome and assist them.

BARRIERS TO THE TRANSFER PROCESS

Since many community college students work full or part time, it is essential that universities become more flexible in their course and degree program offerings during late afternoon and evening. More than 60% of the HELP students indicated that they work. Of that number, 65% work 20 hours or more per week. These students will only be able to complete their baccalaureate degrees if courses are available when they are not working.

Access is a problem for students who do not live near a four-year institution. For many, relocation is out of the question. Therefore, in the case of Cochise College, continuing education offerings will be further expanded. Also, an office has recently been opened on the Sierra Vista campus. Assistance in forming car pools is also being planned.

Financial aid is needed by many transfer students, particularly minority students. It was noted that transfer students sometimes fail to meet the deadline for applying for aid. The HELP program provided reminders, step-by-step instructions and forms to students by mail to ensure that deadlines were met.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Fear of the size and perceived unfriendly atmosphere of the University campus seemed to be a problem for many students. The campus visits on Transfer Day and at other times helped to alleviate some of these apprehensions. The peer buddy system planned for next semester should help to break down this barrier.

Concerns about the rigor and the competitive environment presents a barrier to some students. This is probably an accurate perception compared to the more supportive, less competitive environments of some community college campuses. The University hopes that faculty exchanges regarding the quality of the courses required at the University will be an incentive to community college instructors to upgrade their university-parallel courses where needed. Also, the buddy program, which will match former community college students with incoming transfer students, will demonstrate to students that their peers are making it and they can expect to do so if they come to the University having taken advantage of the excellent preparation that is available at the community college. Students are encouraged to remain at the community college until they have completed their lower division courses or until they have completed at least 36 hours of university-paralled course work satisfactorily.

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
HIGHER EDUCATION LINKAGE PROGRAM STATISTICS

	PIMA	%	COCHISE	%	TOTAL	%
Number Enrolled	101	69.66%	44	30.3%	145	100.00%
AGES:						
Born after 1965 (21 & under)	34	33.7%	16	36.4%	50	34.48%
Born between 1961-64 (22-25)	21	20.8%	9	20.5%	30	20.69%
Born between 1951-60 (26-35)	25	24.8%	13	29.5%	38	26.21%
Born between 1936-50 (36-50)	16	15.8%	5	11.4%	21	14.48%
Born before 1935 (over 50)	3	3.0%		0.0%	3	2.07%
Unreported	2	2.0%	1	2.3%	3	2.07%
Total	101	100.0%	44	100.0%	145	100.00%
ETHNICITY						
American Indian	2	2.0%	0	0.0%	2	1.38%
Asian	2	2.0%	3	6.8%	5	3.45%
Black	1	1.0%	1	2.3%	2	1.38%
Hispanic	13	12.9%	9	20.5%	22	15.17%
White/Caucasian	79	78.2%	31	70.5%	110	75.86%
Other	2	2.0%		0.0%	2	1.38%
Unreported	2	2.0%		0.0%	2	1.38%
Total	101	100.0%	44	100.0%	145	100.00%
WORK STATUS						
Yes	63	62.4%	26	59.1%	89	61.38%
No	34	33.7%	16	36.4%	50	34.48%
Unreported	4	4.0%	2	4.5%	6	4.14%
Total	101	100.0%	44	100.0%	145	100.00%
HOURS WORKED						
40 Hours Plus	15	23.8%	5	19.2%	20	22.47%
20-39 Hours	29	46.0%	8	30.8%	37	41.57%
1-19 Hours	11	17.5%	12	46.2%	23	25.84%
Unreported	8	12.7%	1	3.8%	9	10.11%
Total	63	100.0%	26	100.0%	89	100.00%
STUDENT STATUS (Self Declared)						
Full Time	78	77.2%	30	68.2%	108	74.48%
Part Time	21	20.8%	12	27.3%	33	22.76%
Intermittent	1	1.0%	1	2.3%	2	1.38%
Unreported	1	1.0%	1	2.3%	2	1.38%
Total	101	100.0%	44	100.0%	145	100.00%

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
HIGHER EDUCATION LINKAGE PROGRAM STATISTICS

	PIMA	%	COCHISE	%	TOTAL	%
ANTICIPATED TRANSFER DATE						
SP 1986	11	10.89%	2	4.5%	13	8.97%
F 1986	48	47.52%	21	47.7%	69	47.59%
SP 1987	9	8.91%	4	9.1%	13	8.97%
F 1987	11	10.89%	8	18.2%	19	13.10%
SP 1988	2	1.98%	2	4.5%	4	2.76%
F 1988	3	2.97%	0	0.0%	3	2.07%
SP 1989	1	0.99%	0	0.0%	1	0.69%
F 1989	1	0.99%	1	2.3%	2	1.38%
Unreported	11	10.89%	6	13.6%	17	11.72%
Unknown	4	3.96%	0	0.0%	4	2.76%
Total	101	100.00%	44	100.0%	145	100.00%
MAJORS						
Agriculture						
Nutrition	2		0		2	1.38%
Interior Design	1		3		4	2.76%
Fashion/Merch	1		0		1	0.69%
	4		3		7	4.83%
Arts & Sciences						
Anthropology	1				1	0.69%
Archeology	1				1	0.69%
Architecture			1		1	0.69%
Astronomy			1		1	0.69%
Biology	1				1	0.69%
Chemistry	1				1	0.69%
Communication	1				1	0.69%
Drama	2		1		3	2.07%
English			1		1	0.69%
Graphic Arts	1				1	0.69%
Journalism	1				1	0.69%
Liberal Arts	2		3		5	3.45%
Math	1				1	0.69%
Physics	1				1	0.69%
Psychology	3				3	2.07%
Religious Studies	0		1		1	0.69%
Radio-TV	1		1		2	1.38%
Sociology	2				2	1.38%
Pre-Law	1		2		3	2.07%
Pre-Medicine			1		1	0.69%
Social Service	1				1	0.69%
Social Science	1				1	0.69%
					34	23.45%

Business & Public Administration				
Accounting	4	1	5	3.45%
Business	9	3	12	8.28%
General Business A	8	5	13	8.97%
Finance	1		1	0.69%
Marketing	3	1	4	2.76%
Management	1	1	2	1.38%
Management & Information	4	3	7	4.83%
Real Estate	1	0	1	0.69%
			45	31.03%
Education				
Bilingual	1		1	0.69%
Elementary	7	1	8	5.52%
Secondary	1	1	2	1.38%
Other	11	0	11	7.58%
			22	15.17%
Engineering				
Aerospace	1	2	3	2.07%
Chemical	1	0	1	0.69%
Computer	1	0	1	0.69%
Electrical	3	5	8	5.52%
Other	5	2	7	4.83%
			20	13.79%
Exercise & Sports Science				
Sports Medicine	1		1	0.69%
P.E.	2		2	1.38%
			3	2.07%
Nursing	1	1	2	1.38%
Pharmacy		1	1	0.69%
Undecided			11	7.58%
TOTAL			145	100.00%

AGREEMENT DRAFT

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN COLLEGES/MELLON
PILOT TRANSFER PROJECT

PARTNERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
PIMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
COCHISE COLLEGE

The purpose of the Association of American Colleges/Mellon Pilot Transfer Project is to involve the University of Arizona, Pima Community College District and Cochise College in a pilot effort to improve opportunities for qualified two-year college students to transfer to the University of Arizona so that they may earn baccalaureate degrees. This effort will seek to uncover the problems that hinder such transfers and to find effective ways to overcome the barriers.

The results of this pilot effort and those of the other institutions participating in the project will be published as guidelines to assist all four-year colleges and universities in facilitating the transition process for community college students who plan to transfer to a four-year institution to complete a baccalaureate degree. The guidelines are to be distributed to all regionally accredited four-year institutions.

The University of Arizona will do the following to ensure the successful implementation of the AAC/Mellon Project:

1. Arrange for UA faculty from disciplines with high transfer rates to meet with their counterparts from Pima and Cochise on each community college campus and later at the U of A to identify particular transfer problems in these disciplines, to analyze the problems and develop solutions, and to provide information to be used to develop curriculum transfer guides.

2. Provide the community colleges with current information regarding the majors selected by students who have transferred from their institutions to the University.

3. Offer workshops for UA, Pima and Cochise counselors to exchange information and make plans to ease the transfer process.

4. Arrange for UA academic counselors, financial aid officers, admissions counselors, and other appropriate University staff to meet with Pima and Cochise counselors and students selected to participate in the project as well as other students interested in transfer information.

5. Arrange for consultants to meet with UA, Pima and Cochise representatives to discuss the AAC/Mellon Project and to identify additional barriers for transfer students which need to be addressed.

6. Meet with Pima and Cochise institutional research personnel and other staff to develop selection criteria for those who will participate in the project and determine the data needed to assist in evaluating the project.

7. Initiate joint advising procedures in selected disciplines.

8. Send letters advising students of dual admission and its benefits, including priority registration and housing and orientation discounts.

9. Develop transfer guides in as many disciplines as possible based on the information provided by faculty.

10. Develop a brochure to publicize the project which clearly indicates the program's benefits, including dual admission and dual advising.

Pima Community College District and Cochise College will be asked to do the following to ensure the success of the project:

1. Identify faculty from disciplines with high transfer rates to attend meetings with their UA counterparts on campus and later at the U of A to identify particular transfer problems in these disciplines, to analyze the problems and develop solutions, and to provide information to be used to develop curriculum transfer guides.

2. Select students to participate in the AAC/Mellon Pilot Transfer Project and provide the U of A with current information regarding the students' majors, admissions qualifications, gpa's and other pertinent information.

3. Provide counselors with the opportunity and support to attend information exchanges with UA counselors.

4. Make arrangements for counselors and potential transfer students to attend meetings with UA personnel to obtain transfer information.

5. Select representatives to meet with UA representatives and consultants to discuss the AAC/Mellon Project and to identify additional barriers for transfer students which need to be addressed.

6. Encourage institutional research personnel and other staff to cooperate in developing the selection criteria for those who will participate in the project and in providing the data needed to evaluate the project.

7. Facilitate the cooperation of counselors in joint advising for potential transfer students.

8. Consider the establishment of Transfer Centers on each campus which will provide transfer information and serve as a location for UA personnel to meet with students interested in transferring to the University.

9. Publicize the partnership program in the school paper and other appropriate outlets.

10. Assist with arrangements for potential transfer students to visit the University campus.

JD:km

ERIC Clearinghouse for
Junior Colleges

JUL 11 1986